

Office of Rail Transport

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Main intermodal train routes in Poland

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26.5 m tonnes were transported by intermodal rail services in in 2021, which is 2.7 m tonnes more than in 2020. The most popular intermodal transport routes were those leading from the seaports of Gdańsk and Gdynia to Brzeg Dolny or Warsaw and via the border crossings with Germany and Belarus. The terminals in Małaszewicze, Gdańsk and Gdynia play a major role in international transport.

According to data collected by Office of Rail Transport intermodal transport was in high demand in 2021. After a weaker 2020 in trans-shipments at Polish ports, the volume of TEUs transported increased by 8, 9% in 2021. Intermodal transport carried 26.5 m tonnes of cargo in 2021, compared to 23.8 m tonnes in 2020. It is an increase of 2.7 m tonnes (approximately 11.6%). In 2021, the share of weight carried by intermodal transport in total cargo weight reached 10.9%, while in 2020 the share was 10.7% in 2020 and in 2019 it was 8.3%.

In 2021 43 intermodal terminals operated in Poland. They had a total storage area of 228,528 TEU and a declared annual throughput of more than 9.6 m TEU. The largest terminal in Poland was DCT in Gdańsk. In second place was BCT in Gdynia. The combined annual throughput of these two marine terminals accounted for nearly 43% of the value of the total potential of all such facilities. These terminals are part of global supply chains and handle the largest container ships.



Fig.1 Main intermodal routes launched from the port of Gdańsk in 2021



Fig.2 Main intermodal routes launched from the port of Gdynia in 2021

DOMESTIC INTERMODAL TRANSPORT

A sizable proportion of intermodal trains in domestic transport involves the movement of cargo between intermodal terminals. They are used, i.a., to transport empty containers or to assemble trains from wagons that need to be transported from other locations in the country (hence the train routes between Poznań and Pruszków, Stara Wieś near Kutno and Kolbuszowa, or Brzeg Dolny and Gliwice).



Fig. 3 The most important border crossings for intermodal traffic

The main intermodal train routes from the port of Gdańsk in 2021 were to Brzeg Dolny, Gądk, Kąty Wrocławskie, Kutno, Łódź, Poznań, Radomsko, Sławków and Warsaw. These routes accounted for more than 70% of all routes from the port of Gdańsk.

Connections from the port of Gdynia were mainly to: Ciechanów, Gądek, Kutno, Łódź, Nowe Skalmierzyce, Poznań, Radomsko, Rypin, Warsaw and Terespol Pomorski. These connections accounted for approximately 61% of all connections made from the port of Gdynia in 2021. In the case of connections to Ciechanów, Rypin or Terespol Pomorski, intermodal services were carried out for industrial plants and not for logistics operators and intermodal terminals for further dispatch to the end customer. These goods were carried for the industrial plants in the furniture, paper or agricultural/food sectors.

INTERNATIONAL INTERMODAL TRAINS

Intermodal transport is an important part of international transport. In 2021 5279 trains were routed through the Rzepin - Oderbrücke border crossing and 914 trains through the Węgliniec - Horka crossing (border crossings with Germany). On the other hand, on the eastern border 5066 intermodal trains passed between Brest Severnyy - Małaszewicze Centralne/Południowe (border crossing with Belarus) and 4333 trains passed between Kobylany - Park Bug.

On the Polish border with the Czech Republic 1296 trains passed on Bohumin Vrbice/Bohumín - Chwałupki route, 647 trains on Zebrzydowice - Petrovice u Karviny route and 87 trains on Lichkov - Międzyzylesie route. The number of trains in direct services to Poland's southern border is still low - in the case of Gdańsk to/from Zebrzydowice station, a total of 101 trains were operated, mainly as part of the Paskov terminal service. A total of 784 trains were operated across the railway border crossings between Poland and the Kaliningrad region (Russia) (Zheleznodorozhnyy - Korsze Towarowa: 603 trains and Braniewo - Mamonowo: 181 trains).

Małaszewicze and the surrounding area played a dominant role in the transport of goods in transit between Eastern European and Asian countries. In 2021 1,643 trains from Małaszewicze and Chotyłów were directly operated in the western direction. Commercial rail connections on Eurasian routes - in terms of technical route allocation by the infrastructure manager PKP PLK - can be allocated on the basis of several route applications (e.g. by terminating an inland route, e.g. at Koluszki, Miłkowice, Skierniewice, and then starting another route to the border station). An intermodal connection to Germany via Braniewo/Mamonowo border crossing has also been used for East-West connections on the New Silk Road for several years.

In addition to transit trains going through the border sections, those directly from/to the terminus stations were also run - in Oderbruecke there were 4764 trains, in Bohumin Vrbice - 1081 trains and in Petrovice u Karviny - 331 trains.

On routes to and from Western Europe, starting or ending in Poland, the key stations are Stara Wieś (near Kutno), Swarzędz, Gądko (an important station for handling of semi-trailers in intermodal traffic), Poznań Franowo, Pruszków and Gliwice - all of which generate traffic via the Rzepin/Oderbruecke border crossing. The service facilities (intermodal terminals) located in the Lower Silesian Voivodship influence intermodal rail traffic through the border crossing Węglińiec/Horka. For the border crossing Bohumin Vrbice/Bohumin-Chałupki the trans-shipments at the terminal in Sławków and the loads handled at the Jaworzno Szczakowa station are dominant.

Among intermodal and transit connections within the New Silk Road, there are many connections operated from the territory of Poland. Among these, the key ones are those using the following terminals: Łódź (Olechów), Gądko, Poznań, Swarzędz, Stara Wieś (near Kutno). For intermodal connections from countries across Poland's eastern border, the most important stations are those in Łódź, Stara Wieś (near Kutno), Poznań and Warsaw.